

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Final Official Action mailed April 7, 2006. In the present paper, claims 1, 9, 15 and 19 are amended and claims 22-24 and 27-29 are canceled. Claims 3, 4, 14, 18, 21, 25 and 26 were previously canceled. Claims 1, 2, 5-13, 15-17, 19 and 20 are now presented for consideration by the Examiner.

In the Final Official Action, the Examiner has objected to claims 19 and 20 as being dependent on a canceled claim. Applicant has amended claim 19 to correct that informality.

On the merits, the Examiner has rejected all claims remaining in the case except claims 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,680,880 to Miyake et al. ("Miyake ") in various combinations with several other references.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 27-29 contain allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims.

To expedite issuance of the present application, and without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 9 and 15 to incorporate the limitations of allowable claims 27-29, respectively, and have canceled claims 27-29. Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 9 and 15 are now allowable for at least that reason, and that the dependent claims depending from those claims are similarly allowable at least by reason of their incorporated limitations.

Also to expedite issuance and without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicants have canceled claims 22-24, preserving the right to pursue those claims in a later continuation.

*Conclusion*

Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claims 1, 2, 5-13, 15-17, 19 and 20 are now in condition for allowance, and earnestly requests that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowance.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the present case, the Examiner should not hesitate in contacting the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully,

By 

Robert T. Canavan  
Reg. No. 37,592  
Telephone: 908-707-1568

Canavan & Monka LLC  
250 State Route 28, Suite 207  
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

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